



# Promoting the Social Workers in Schools service

## Information for SWiS workers in primary and intermediate schools



### *Introduction*

The best way to promote SWiS is by the SWiS worker having face to face contact with people. These are the students, family/whānau, school staff and wider community.

It is important that the SWiS worker has familiarised themselves with the SWiS role and where the lines of responsibility, accountability and boundaries are before embarking on the promotion of SWiS. SWiS is a professional service and it is important that you are seen as confident and that you are clear about the service you provide.

A comprehensive induction programme has been developed for all new SWiS social workers and this is contained in the SWiS Toolkit. It is recommended that the induction is completed with your Provider manager before embarking on promoting SWiS. In addition, you should have access to key service documents, which describe roles, responsibilities and accountabilities. These are:

- Service Description
- Partnering Agreement
- Contract Monitoring Protocols

Business cards should be available for you to give out, which include the SWiS worker's name, title, provider name, the cluster of schools served, contact phone numbers, postal address and email details. Cards may be given to students, family/whānau, community agencies and key contact people. In addition, there are SWiS information leaflets and posters available in English, Te Reo Māori, Samoan and Tongan.



### *Promoting the SWiS service in school*

Providers should give you an induction training programme into the organisation and the service. The details of this are included in the induction booklets contained in your SWiS Toolkit. There are some ways in which you can promote yourself and the SWiS service soon after you have completed your induction training. These include:

- Some schools may wish to have a powhiri for their new SWiS social worker. This is an opportunity for you to introduce yourself and the service you will provide to You should be first introduced to the principals within your school cluster and then the senior management staff of each school.



- Ask for an opportunity to introduce yourself at the next Board of Trustee meeting.
- Introduce yourself at the staff meeting of each school.
- A Power Point presentation has been made available for you to use, which describes how you can help children and their family and whānau, for use with professional staff in school. You may wish to use this or adapt it for your use, while promoting the SWiS service in meetings with colleagues. You may be replacing an existing SWiS and if so, it is important to be yourself and explain what your expectations are.
- Display the SWiS leaflets and posters at opportune places around the school and in other community organisations and events.
- You may wish to introduce yourself to the students at a school assembly with a brief talk about what your role is, where you will be housed in the school, how often you will be there and how the students can access you. Alternatively, you could visit classes individually.
- Attend school functions such as galas, sports days, parent-teacher evenings, cultural events and any other special events. This helps create a positive rapport with students and their family and whānau.
- An introduction to the new SWiS social worker may be placed in the school newsletter, on the school notice board and in the school website. You may wish to write something about yourself and use a photograph so people will be able to recognise you
- At the start of the school year, and throughout the year, all school staff attend training days. Be an active part of these and have an input into the school community priorities and action plans. Remember, one of the key outcomes for the SWiS service is to have children engaged in school so contribute to the meetings from a SWiS perspective and think about the group programmes you could do to help the school achieve the changes they want to make.
- Attend school staff functions and develop your networks through this informal process.
- Be involved in local community initiatives, for example, in reducing local traffic accidents, work with the community and the school to think of creative ways in which you could be involved.



### *Promoting the SWiS service with Education Support Staff*

Meet with the staff from:

- Ministry of Education Special Education, also known in some areas as GSE or SES
- Behavioural Education Support Team
- Resource Teacher of Learning and Behaviour
- Resource Teacher of Literacy
- Speech Language Specialist

Many of these support staff will be involved with SWiS clients and are a very important network. Of course as well as promoting your service, find out what they do and how they may support your work.

In addition, find out about the Teacher Aides in your schools, as they may be supporting high needs students that you may also become involved with.





## *Promoting the SWiS service in Community Forums*

Networking is an important function of the SWiS role. Other community partners provide important services which your clients may benefit from and it is important that you are aware of these and have good working relationships with the staff. Communities have many forums: find out about them and attend where possible. For example, the **Strengthening Families** forum is available in most areas. This is an opportunity where all agencies working with a family come together with the family and whānau and their support people. The aim is to work collaboratively and to strengthen the family and whānau, therefore achieving positive outcomes for the future.

You may wish to ask for an invitation to the next staff meeting or community forum with any of the following groups:

- Work & Income New Zealand
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
- Police Youth Aid, Police Education officers, Community Constable
- District Truancy Officers
- Non Enrolled Truancy Service (NETS)
- Safer Community Councils
- Public Health Nurse
- Iwi and Pacific Social Services
- Māori Health Providers
- NZ Health Camps
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Council of Social Services

This is not an exhaustive list and you may wish to look in your local Community Services Directory, or on the Family & Community Services website for more information about your local community organisations and programmes.



## *Promoting the SWiS service with Child Youth & Family*

The CYF-SWiS Interface Guidelines were developed and disseminated in 2008. These guidelines suggest ways in which the working relationship between CYF and SWiS can be improved for the benefit of our shared client group. You should have a copy of this in your SWiS Toolkit. Have a read of the Guidelines and discuss them with your Provider manager about how this has been or will be taken forward locally.

In 2009 Differential Response became a way of working across CYF. There are local Differential Response Coordinators. Make contact with your local coordinator and see how you can be involved with this initiative to help the children and families in your school community.

Meet the social workers in your local CYF site. For those children who are in the custody or guardianship of Chief Executive, additional funding could be available for them to have intensive one to one support in school under the Enhancing Education programme. This programme is designed to support a child's behaviour in school so that they can



learn. If you have a child in your school who you think would benefit from this kind of support, speak with their social worker about it.

	<i>Conclusion</i>
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The success of a SWiS programme is dependent on building good working relationships and networks with the children, family and whānau, school and a range of community organisations. In this way, the children will benefit from responsive and coordinated services not just within SWiS but within the community at large.

